



**PHYSICAL THERAPY**  
**Concussion Information Sheet**

**What is a concussion?** A concussion is defined as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces.

**Concussion Signs and Symptoms:**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Headache           | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty falling asleep         | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary loss of memory       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blurred Vision     | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty focusing/concentrating | <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability/Emotional         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nausea/Vomiting    | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling like you're in a "fog"    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to light or noises |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Pressure" in Head | <input type="checkbox"/> Balance Problems                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue/Sleepiness             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dazed Appearance   |  |   |

**\*\* If any signs/symptoms worsen, take your child to the ER immediately.**

**\*\* Symptoms may linger for several days.**

**Concussion Facts:**

1. Symptoms can be subtle, such as a headache or feeling sluggish.
2. Symptoms may not surface until 48 to 72 hours after the injury.
3. Recovery is different from person to person who sustains a concussion, thus recovery time cannot and should not be pre-determined until after medical evaluation and post-concussion evaluation by a certified athletic trainer.

**Concussion Myths:**

1. You have to have loss of consciousness to have sustained a concussion.
  - Studies show that less than 10% of concussions result in loss of consciousness.
2. Concussions are only a result of a direct blow to the head.
  - A concussion can be sustained by a sudden, violent movement of the head caused by an un-expected external force to the body.
3. You need to wake someone every 20 minutes.
  - Though it is important to check on someone periodically, it does not have to be every 20 minutes. Once every 2-3 hours is sufficient.
4. You need to check pupils with a flash light to see if they are dilated or un-even.
  - There is no need to do this when someone is conscious due to they would not have dilated or unequal pupils and be able to speak with you.

**Management of a Concussion:**

When a concussion is suspected, it should be brought to the attention of an athletic trainer and/or a physician for further evaluation. Further tests may be recommended by your physician to rule out any bleeding.

**What to avoid and do when a concussion is suspected:** Things that should be considered so recovery is not delayed:

- Avoid any loud noises (Music, TV, Band practices, or listening to an IPOD)
- Avoid texting, reading, video games, typing, or inter net use. All of these activities cause an increase in cognitive function which puts a strain on the brain
- Avoid any over-the-counter aspirin (Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aleve) which may mask any symptoms
- If studying is needed to be done for a quiz or test the next day or that week, the school nurse, athletic director, administrator and/or guidance counselor should be contacted and made aware that a concussion is suspected and postponement of any quizzes or exams may be needed.
- Staying home from school may be recommended if concussed individual wakes up or begins to experience headaches right away. This may delay recovery, as well.

**Return to Participation:**

**\*\* It is recommended that your child be checked by a physician and/or athletic trainer prior to their return to sport participation. Even after a medical release, post-concussion testing must be done with an athletic trainer to see if any symptoms are re-produced. Athlete may feel fine at rest, but symptoms may be exacerbated with physical activity. Other tests may include a neuro-cognitive test which uses computer software to test cognitive functioning.**

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***This guideline is for information purposes only and does not constitute medical advice.***